

**Procedures:**

- **Episode 1: Disasters Strike** [[watch clip, duration 2:30](#)]
- In what ways was it helpful for a Roman emperor to proclaim himself a god or an heir to a god?
- How was religion used to explain the natural disasters that affected the empire?

- **Episode 2: Jesus' Message** [[watch clip, duration 1:20](#)]
- Why were people such as Jews and Christians persecuted by the Romans?
- Why were religious leaders such as Jesus considered politically subversive by Roman leaders?

- **Episode 3: Rome Burns** [[watch clip, duration 2:30](#)]

- How were people with unpopular religious beliefs shunned and persecuted?
- Even though they risked persecution, why were so many people willing to accept the teachings of Christianity?

2. Discuss each of the following topics as it related to the religion of the Roman Empire:

- How was religion used by emperors/the state to control the majority of the population?
- Why were the people of that time so easily influenced by religion?
- What is the difference between monotheism (one god) and polytheism (many gods)?
- The ancient Romans practiced cult worship in that they accurately observed and followed religious rituals to please the gods rather than having good moral conduct. How is this different from the beliefs of many modern day religions?

- . In the U.S. and in many countries around the world, we separate church and state issues so that political and lawmaking decisions are not based on religious beliefs, but on the rights guaranteed by the constitution. Why do you think the leaders of the Roman Empire and many other ancient civilizations chose to keep a strong connection between the church and the government, often placing priests and church leaders in positions of great power?